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ART. VII. — 1. *The Attaché ; or Sam Slick in England.*

By the Author of "The Clockmaker, or the Sayings and Doings of Sam Slick," &c. New York : William H. Colyer. 1843. 8vo. pp. 76.

2. *Change for the American Notes : in Letters from London to New York.* By an American Lady. New York : Harper and Brothers. 1843. 8vo. pp. 88.

THE author of "The Attaché," understood to be one of the Nova Scotian judges, has acquired considerable reputation by the humorous sketches he has published under the pseudonym of Sam Slick. These sketches have been widely circulated both in England and America, and have been praised more than they deserve. They show a perception of the ludicrous, and sometimes a talent for witty description. Mr. Slick is designed by the author to be a representative of the common New England character. The keen pursuit of gain, the eagerness for driving a bargain, the resort to trickery and even downright fraud, which have been charged upon the Yankee, are drawn out at great length in the character of Mr. Samuel Slick, the pedler. That very apocryphal personage, the Yankee pedler, with his clocks and wooden nutmegs, is the most common object of the jeers and jokes of our Southern brethren, whose mythical and highly imaginative notions of the men of the North it seems quite impossible to correct. These myths have been taken up, apparently in good faith, by the provincial judge, and, with a still more poetical coloring, drawn from the gentleman's own lively fancy, presented in the person of Mr. Slick. No doubt, there is some foundation for these representations ; something approaching a type, by the gross exaggeration of which these distorted and scarcely recognizable images are produced. The New England trader, pedler, or whatever he may be, is, doubtless, sharp at a bargain, and shrewd to turn his opportunities of gain to excellent account ; but not more so than the corresponding classes of men elsewhere. Sam Slick is no proper representative of the Yankees. He is badly conceived ; his character is an incongruous mixture of impossible eccentricities. His sayings are sometimes not destitute of wit ; but his language is a ridiculous compound of provincial solecisms, extravagant figures, vulgarities drawn

from distant sources, which can never meet in an individual, and a still greater variety of vulgar expressions, which are simply and absolutely the coinage of the provincial writer's own brain. On this point we speak with some confidence. We can distinguish the real from the counterfeit Yankee, at the first sound of the voice, and by the turn of a single sentence; and we have no hesitation in declaring, that Sam Slick is not what he pretends to be; that there is no organic life in him; that he is an impostor, an impossibility, a non-entity.

A writer of genius, even if he write from imperfect knowledge, will, as it were, breathe the breath of life into his creations. Sam Slick is an awkward and highly infelicitous attempt to make a character, by heaping together, without discrimination, selection, arrangement, or taste, every vulgarity that a vulgar imagination can conceive, and every knavery that a man blinded by national and political prejudice can charge upon neighbours whom he dislikes. The true New England character has never yet been portrayed, with a mastery of the subject, in a work of fiction. It has capabilities, both of serious and humorous representation, that a poet, or novelist, familiar with it from his birth, and possessing the shaping power of imagination, might work out with the most striking effect. And in the terse peculiarities of the New England idiom, the grave, far-reaching sense of the Massachusetts farmer, the humorous, sly, and quaint expressions in which his thought is uttered, the delineator of manners, had he the discerning eye, might find the rich elements of varied character, almost wholly new to the world of letters. But the attempt will never be successfully made, until some native writer, of genius to create, and culture to represent, characters with the true national stamp, shall set aside foreign models, outlandish turns of expression, and the conventional manners displayed in novels that exhibit a society wholly unlike our own, in order to study the humors and peculiarities of American life. Mr. Cooper has made some bad attempts at American characters; his creations of this kind are only not quite so unhappy as that of Mr. Slick.

The author of this work is a Tory of the most violent description. A provincial always exaggerates the opinions, manners, and fashions of the parties at home, to whom he would fain assimilate himself. There is something belittling

in his condition, and in the influences to which he is subjected. He has not the lofty consciousness of belonging to a great nation, — of being, among his fellow-subjects, a peer among equals. He has, on the contrary, an uncomfortable sense of inferiority ; he shows an uneasy and restless effort to disguise the character which his birth has stamped inefaceably upon him, and to assume another, which his allegiance to a distant sovereign prompts him to desire. All his standards of thought, action, manners, and dress are thousands of miles distant. The authorities he must obey are afar off ; the rays of sovereignty fall only in feeble reflection upon him. The things he worships are the fancied grandeurs and glories of another hemisphere. But the great nation has affairs enough of its own to attend to at home. It can take but little note of the colonists, except to send them bad governors, and to mismanage their affairs. Hence springs up an irritating sense of neglect, a petty but not unnatural jealousy, like that felt by persons who, not being quite sure of their social position, torment themselves with imaginary, no less than real, grievances from those above them. The mind, under such circumstances, has no free, natural, and beautiful development. Its growth is stunted and distorted ; it becomes a sickly plant, and can never bear sound and healthy fruit. In politics, men form their party attachments ; but without the moulding and softening influences that work upon them at home, where the great business of administration is carried on, political sentiments are violent and bigoted, and bear the same relation to those of similar appellation in the metropolis, that a travestie bears to the original work it burlesques. Toryism is terribly embittered by distance from the fountain head ; and Radicalism puts on a manifold ferocity in remote and unfrequented wilds. The provincial Tory, who visits the mother country, is like a Tory of three hundred years ago returned to life. He finds, that his prejudices and predilections have no counterpart in the actual state of affairs. His views are shockingly antiquated. A pernicious liberalism has insinuated itself into the principles even of the Tory leaders, whom he had looked up to in distant reverence from his remote provincial home. In short, whatever be his affinities or biases, he finds his guides widely different from what he had fondly dreamed. He is in a condition like that of the village belle, who apes the fashions of some great city, and,

in aping them, overacts the part, adopting all that is absurd and extravagant, and failing to acquire the grace and dignity with which they are worn in the proper circles.

All these remarks apply to the author of "Sam Slick." He must have found himself, while in England, immeasurably behind the age. He seems to have adopted the cast-off dogmas of the Toryism of former centuries ; and he was as much misplaced in the England of the nineteenth century, as a contemporary of Rameses the First would have been, had he risen from the mummy-pit, and appeared at the court of the Ptolemies. It seems almost incredible, that a man of ordinary powers of observation and discernment can gravely repeat the antiquated political absurdities, which this writer appears to have treasured in his very soul, as the quintessence of all political wisdom. This is a striking example of what we have hinted at ; the belittling effects of the colonial system on the intellects of colonists. A full and complete national existence is requisite to the formation of a manly, intellectual character. What great work of literature or art has the colonial mind ever produced ? What free, creative action of genius can take place under the withering sense of inferiority, that a distant dependency of a great empire can never escape from ? Any consciousness of nationality, however humble the nation may be, is preferable to the second-hand nationality of a colony of the mightiest empire that ever flourished. The intense national pride, which acts so forcibly in the United States, is something vastly better than the intellectual paralysis that deadens the energies of men in the British American provinces. A character is forming under the republican institutions of the United States, which, though some of its manifestations during the forming period are disagreeable and unpromising, will at least find a free and bold utterance in speech and action ; will stamp itself on the literature of the world ; will shape itself in the forms of art ; will reconstruct the edifice of social life, and play a daring part on the theatre of the age. Its voice is already heard, vindicating to itself a place among the nationalities of the earth. The great minds it has formed are uttering their convictions in words of a fiery eloquence, which almost bring back the triumphs of the Rostrum and the Bema. Is there any thing like this in the British colonies ? Can there be any thing like this, while they remain

colonies ? Who ever heard the name of a poet, or a painter, or a sculptor, or a great statesman, a colonist ?

But to return to the work before us. The lovers of light literature have read the former books, which record the sayings and doings of Sam Slick, and some have been entertained by what they mistook for wit and humor. At any rate, their circulation has been such as to tempt the writer to work the vein still further. How far the blame of this proceeding is to be laid to the long ears of a "discerning public," or to the suggestions of a partially successful author's vanity, we shall not undertake to say ; but thus much is quite certain, that the vein, such as it was, gave out long before the author did ; that all the humor, poor as it was, in the conception of Sam Slick's character, was exhausted long before the end of the first week of his official existence as *Attaché* to the American Legation at the court of St. James. In making out the plot of this work, the author was driven to adopt the most improbable absurdities ; not simple extravagancies, which genius may clothe with originality, and exalt into brilliant conceptions, by its kindling power ; but absurdities unredeemed by ingenuity or novelty, plausibility or wit. The supposition, that a person like Major Jack Downing could have been the intimate friend and adviser of the President of the United States, was an extravagance ; yet the originality and truth of the Major's character, the sagacity of his observations, the felicity and idiomatic point of his language, and the argumentative wit of his illustrations, redeemed the improbability of the first conception, and gave a wide and immediate popularity to his letters, almost unexampled in America. The idea of Sam Slick, the *Attaché*, is evidently borrowed from our friend the Major ; but the improbable part was taken, and all the wit was left behind. Sam Slick, the *quondam* pedler, is represented as appointed to a place on the most important foreign mission, with every possible vulgarity of thought, speech, and action in full blossom. He appears in England, is invited about in English society, associates with the statesmen and noblemen of that proud monarchy, and communicates to our author the results of his observations. All this is violently improbable. It is, in the first place, impossible for any such person, even in our abused and long-suffering democracy, to receive an appointment like that ; and, secondly, if we could get over this im-

possibility, it would still be impossible for such an individual to obtain any access to the society which he is described as frequenting. Here, then, we have two stubborn impossibilities to start with. But we might pardon even these, if the character of the *Attaché* had been drawn with any truth and liveliness ; if his language had been other than coarse and gross, and false to the spirit of the American idioms. But nothing can equal the falsehood and vulgarity of the book, even after we have got over the outrageous extravagance of the main circumstances of the plot, except its incredible dullness. A writer of genius would certainly have the means, in the rich contrasts between the various phases of English life, and between English life as a whole and American life, to present a series of pictures at once amusing and instructive, even though the framework of the story were absurdity itself ; and, in some passages, this author has shown feeble glimpses of a power to appreciate the capabilities of the subject. In some parts of Mr. Slick's description of what it is the author's pleasure to make him call a "juicy day," we see faint intimations of a sense of the humorous bearings of the scene. It is clumsily overwrought, and outrages nature and probability ; but some of the points are seized, and tolerably managed. The whole chapter is too long for quotation ; we can only pick out, here and there, a "juicy" passage. The following passage contains Mr. Slick's meditations on an English rainy day, and a little incident that befel him on his first morning at an English country-house, which he had been invited to visit.

"A wet day is considerable tiresome, anywhere, or any way you can fix it ; but it's wus at an English country house than anywhere else, cause you are among strangers, formal, cold, gallus polite, and as thick in the head-piece as a puncheon. You hante nothin' to do yourself, and they never have nothin' to do ; they don't know nothin' about America, and don't want to. Your talk don't interest them, and they can't talk to interest nobody but themselves ; all you've got to do is to pull out your watch and see how time goes ; how much of the day is left, and then go to the winder and see how the sky looks, and whether there is any chance of holdin' up or no. Well, that time I went to bed a little airlier than common, for I felt considerable sleepy, and considerable strange, too ; so, as soon as I cleverly could, I off and turned in.

“ Well, I am an airly riser myself ; I always was from a boy. So I waked up jist about the time when day ought to break, and was a thinkin’ to get up ; but the shutters was too, and it was as dark as ink in the room, and I heerd it rainin’ away for dear life. ‘ So,’ sais I to myself, ‘ what the dogs is the use of gettin’ up so airly ? I can’t get out and get a smoke, and I can’t do nothin’ here ; so here goes for a second nap.’ Well, I was soon off agin in a most a beautiful of a snore, when all at once I heard a thump, thump agin the shutter, and the most horrid noise I ever heerd since I was raised ; it was somethin’ quite onairthly.

“ ‘ Hallo ! ’ says I to myself, ‘ what in nature is all this hubbub about ? Can this here confounded old house be harnted ? Is them spirits that’s jabbering gibberish there, or is I wide awake or no ? ’ So I sets right up on my hind legs in bed, rubs my eyes, opens my ears, and listens agin, — when whop went every shutter agin, with a dead, heavy sound, like somethin’ or another thrown agin ’em, or fallin’ agin ’em, and then comes the unknown tongues in discord chorus like. Sais I, ‘ I know now, it’s them cussed navigators. They’ve besot the house, and are a givin’ lip to frighten folks. It’s regular banditti.’

“ So I jist hops out of bed, and feels for my trunk, and outs with my talkin’ irons, that was already loaded, pokes my way to the window, shoves the sash up, and outs with the shutter, ready to let slip among ’em. And what do you think it was ? Hundreds and hundreds of them nasty, dirty, filthy, ugly, black devils of rooks, located in the trees at the back eend of the house. Old Nick couldn’t have slept near ’em ; caw, caw, caw, all mixed up together in one jumble of a sound, like ‘ jawe.’

“ ‘ You black, evil-lookin’, foul-mouthed villains,’ sais I, ‘ I ’d like no better sport than jist to sit here all this blessed day with these pistols, and drop you one arter another, I know.’ But they all was pets, was them rooks, and of course, like all pets, everlastin’ nuisances to everybody else.

“ Well, when a man’s in a feeze, there’s no more sleep that hitch ; so I dresses and sits up. But what was I to do ? It was jist half past four, and as it was a rainin’ like every thing, I know’d breakfast wouldn’t be ready till eleven o’clock, for nobody wouldn’t get up, if they could help it, — they wouldn’t be such fools ; so there was jail for six hours and a half.” — p. 11.

Mr. Slick, like other mortals, cannot resist the attractions of English beauty. Hear him a little upon this point.

“ Come, I’ll try the women folk in the drawin’-room aign. Ladies don’t mind the rain here ; they are used to it. It’s like

the musk plant, arter you put it to your nose once, you can't smell it a second time. Oh, what beautiful gals they be ! What a shame it is to bar a feller out such a day as this. One on 'em blushes like a red cabbage, when she speaks to me ; that's the one, I reckon, I disturbed this mornin'. Cuss the rooks ! I'll pyson them, and that wont make no noise.

"She shows me the consarvitery. 'Take care, sir, your coat has caught this geranium,' and she onhitches it. 'Stop, sir, you'll break this jillyflower,' and she lifts off the coat-tail again ; in fact, it's so crowded, you can't squeeze along scarcely, without a doin' of mischief somewhere or another.

"Next time she goes first, and then it's my turn. 'Stop, miss,' sais I, 'your frock has this rose tree over,' and I loosens it ; once more, 'Miss, this rose has got tangled,' and I ontangles it from her furbeloes.

"I wonder what makes my hand shake so, and my heart it bumps so, it has bust a button off. If I stay in this consarvitery, I shan't consarve myself long, that's a fact ; for this gal has put her whole team on, and is a runnin' me off the road. 'Hullo ! what's that ? Bell for dressin' for dinner.' Thank Heavens ! I shall escape from myself, and from this beautiful critter, too, for I'm getting spoony, and shall talk silly presently.

"I don't like to be left alone with a gal, it's plaguy apt to set me a soft-sawderin' and a courtin'. There's a sort of natteral attraction like in this world. Two ships in a calm are sure to get up alongside of each other, if there's no wind, and they have nothin' to do but look at each other ; natur does it. Well, even the tongs and the shovel won't stand alone long ; they're sure to get on the same side of the fire, and be sociable ; one of 'em has a loadstone and draws t'other, that's sartain. If that's the case with hard-hearted things, like oak and iron, what is it with tender-hearted things, like humans ? Shut me up in a 'sarvitery with a handsome gal of a rainy day, and see if I don't think she is the sweetest flower in it. Yes, I am glad it is the dinner-bell, for I ain't ready to marry yet, and when I am, I guess I must get a gal where I got my hoss, in Old Connecticut, and that State takes the shine off of all creation for geese, gals, and onions, that's a fact." — p. 14.

The following story, illustrating the meaning of one of Sam's phrases, "t' other eend of the gun," is not ill told.

"'Well, Squire,' said he, 'I am glad, too, you are agoin' to England along with me : we will take a rise out of John Bull, won't we ? We've hit Blue-nose and Brother Jonathan, both, pretty considerably tarñation hard, and John has split his sides

with larfter. Let's tickle him now, by feeling his own short ribs, and see how he will like it; we'll soon see whose hide is the thickest, his'n or ourn, won't we? Let's see whether he will say chee, chee, chee, when he gets to t'other eend of the gun.'

" 'Well, what is the meaning of that saying?' I asked. 'I never heard it before.'

" 'Why,' said he, 'when I was considerable of a grown-up saplin' of a boy to Slickville, I used to be a gunnin' for everlastingly a'most in our hickory woods, a shootin' of squirrels with a rifle, and I got amazin' expart at it. I could take the head off of them chatterin'-like imps, when I got a fair shot at 'em with a ball, at any reasonable distance, a'most in nine cases out of ten.'

" 'Well, one day I was out as usual, and our Irish help, Paddy Burke, was along with me, and every time he see'd me a drawin' off the head fine on 'em, he would say, "Well, you've an excellent gun entirely, Master Sam. Oh, by Jakers! the squirrel has no chance with that gun; it's an excellent one entirely."

" 'At last, I got tired of hearin' of him a jawin' so for ever and a day about the excellent gun entirely; so, sais I, "You fool you, do you think it's the gun that does it *entirely*, as you say? ain't there a little dust of skill in it? Do you think you could fetch one down?"

" ' "Oh, it's a capital gun entirely," said he.

" ' "Well," said I, "if 't is, try it now, and see what sort of a fist you'll make of it."

" ' "So Paddy takes the rifle, lookin' as knowin' all the time as if he had ever see'd one afore. Well, there was a great red squirrel on the tip-top of a limb, chatterin' away like any thing, chee, chee, chee, proper frightened; he know'd it warn't me that was a parsecutin' of him, and he expected he'd be hurt. They know'd me, did the little critters, when they see'd me, and they know'd I never had hurt one on 'em, — my balls never givin' 'em a chance to feel what was the matter of them; but Pat they didn't know, and they see'd he warn't the man to handle "Old Bull-dog." I used to call my rifle Bull-dog, cause she always bit afore she barked.

" ' "Pat threw one foot out astarn, like a skullin' oar, and then bent forrads like a hoop, and fetched the rifle slowly up to the line and shot to the right eye. Chee, chee, chee, went the squirrel. He see'd it was wrong. "By the powers!" sais Pat, "this is a left-handed boot," and he brought the gun to the other shoulder, and then shot to his left eye. "Fegs!" sais Pat, "this gun was made for a squint eye, for I can't get a right straight sight of the critter, either side." So I fixt it for him, and

told him which eye to sight by. "An excellent gun entirely," sais Pat, "but it tante made like the rifles we have."

"'Ain't they strange critters, them Irish, Squire? That fellow never handled a rifle afore in all his born days; but, unless it was to a priest, he wouldn't confess that much for the world. They are as bad as the English that way; they always pretend they know every thing."

"'Come, Pat," sais I, "blaze away now." Back goes the hind leg again, up bends the back, and Bull-dog rises slowly to his shoulder, and then he stared and stared, until his arm shook like palsy. Chee, chee, chee, went the squirrel again, louder than ever, as much as to say, "Why the plague don't you fire? I'm not a goin' to stand here all day for you this way," and then, throwin' his tail over his back, he jumped on to the next branch.

"'By the piper that played before Moses!" sais Pat, "I'll stop your chee, chee, cheein' for you, you chatterin' spalpeen of a devil, you." So he ups with the rifle again, takes a fair aim at him, shuts both eyes, turns his head round, and fires; and "Bull-dog," findin' he didn't know how to hold her tight to the shoulder, got mad, and kicked him head over heels on the broad of his back. Pat got up, a makin' awful wry faces, and began to limp, to show how lame his shoulder was, and to rub his arm, to see if he had one left, and the squirrel ran about the tree hoppin' mad, hollerin' out as loud as it could scream, chee, chee, chee.

"'Oh, bad luck to you!" says Pat, "if you had a been at t'other eend of the gun," and he rubbed his shoulder agin, and cried like a baby, "you wouldn't have said chee, chee, chee, that way, I know."

"'Now, when your gun, Squire, was a knockin' over Bluenose, and making a proper fool of him, and a knockin' over Jonathan, and a spilin' of his bran-new clothes, the English sung out chee, chee, chee, till all was blue agin. You had an excellent gun entirely then; let's see if they will sing out chee, chee, chee, now, when we take a shot at *them*. Do you take?' and he laid his thumb on his nose, as if perfectly satisfied with the application of his story. 'Do you take, Squire? you have an excellent gun entirely, as Pat says. It's what I call putting the leak into 'em properly. If you had a written this book fust, the English would have said your gun was no good; it wouldn't have been like the rifles they had seen. Lord, I could tell you stories about the English, that would make even them cryin' devils, the Mississippi crocodiles, laugh, if they was to hear 'em.'" — p. 18.

Mr. Slick, like Mr. Sam Weller, is very fond of these il-

lustrative stories ; in this respect, he doubtless imitates his illustrious predecessor. But we cannot often award him the praise of a successful imitation. His stories are too long, and very often dull. In the eighth chapter, for example, the attempt at an amusing sketch of Mr. Rufus Dodge's visit to Niagara Falls is too strained to excite any other feeling than a sense of weariness, and a sincere regret, that the author should have cudgelled his brains so hard to so little purpose. The absurdity of the whole representation is so great, that we can only say, "*Incredulus odi*," to every word of it. As to being entertained by such a tasteless and awkward effort to be funny, the coarsest and broadest laughter would read it without the slightest peril to his gravity.

One of the prominent characters in the work is Mr. Hopewell, an aged clergyman of the American Episcopal Church. The author has evidently an affection for this prosy old gentleman, his politics, and his general views of men and things. His lectures to Sam on manners and conversation, on the propriety of using and the impropriety of omitting titles, and his Latin and Greek quotations to that erudite functionary, are truly edifying ; and it is surprising, that Sam, having for many years enjoyed the valuable instructions of the reverend gentleman, should have derived so little benefit from them. In truth, the conception of this character is feeble, and we soon weary of it. Mr. Hopewell's doings and sayings, both on board ship, and after his arrival in England, are not those which a man of ordinary sense would do and say, there or anywhere else. We recognize in the delineation the same infirmity of hand, the same inability to draw and sustain a consistent character, — a character that shall act like a human being, with the motives, feelings, and senses of a human being, — which we have noted in the other personages of the story. The scene in the cottage, described in the eleventh chapter, is quite mawkish and silly ; and nearly as much so is the twelfth chapter, entitled, "Stealing the Hearts of the People," wherein the clergyman is represented as preaching in an English church against all the reforms of the times, and portraying the blessings enjoyed by the poor in that happy country, especially the blessings derived from an Established Church, with such irresistible force and energy, that he convinced William Hodgins, a sturdy radical, of the sin of the Chartist agitation, saved him

from ruin, and made his wife a happy woman. It requires but the simplest statement, to show the extravagant absurdity of this representation. It needed the exaggerated loyalty, the high wrought Toryism of a provincial, to venture to make it, in the face of the existing evils in the condition of the English poor, the oppressiveness of the English Established Church, and its utter inadequacy to the religious or secular instruction of the body of the people. No Englishman of any party would have risked his character for sanity, by gravely putting forth such unreal mockeries, in this nineteenth century. We take a few paragraphs from one of Mr. Hopewell's numerous discourses, and then leave him, with the single remark, that we do not believe there lives an American clergyman of the Episcopal Church, so disloyal to his country, so insensible to the glory of her great historical names, so stupidly blind to all that is noble in her institutions, and all that she is doing to better the condition of man, as to speak of the American Revolution, and of the men who effected it, as the present author, making Mr. Hopewell his mouthpiece, has the insolence and folly to write, in the extract which follows.

“ ‘ And besides, my good friend, I have much to say to you relative to the present condition and future prospects of this great country. I have lived to see a few ambitious lawyers, restless demagogues, and political preachers, and unemployed local officers of provincial regiments, agitate and sever thirteen colonies at one time from the government of England. I have witnessed the struggle. It was a fearful, a bloody, and an unnatural one. My opinions, therefore, are strong, in proportion as my experience is great. I have abstained, on account of their appearing like preconceptions, from saying much to you yet, for I want to see more of this country, and to be certain that I am quite right before I speak.

“ ‘ When you return, I will give you my views on some of the great questions of the day. Do n't adopt them ; hear them, and compare them with your own. I would have you think for yourself, for I am an old man now, and sometimes I distrust my powers of mind.

“ ‘ The state of this country, you, in your situation, ought to be thoroughly acquainted with. It is a very perilous one. Its prosperity, its integrity, nay, its existence as a first-rate power, hangs by a thread, and that thread but little better and stronger than a cotton one. *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*

I look in vain for that constitutional vigor and intellectual power which once ruled the destinies of this great nation.

“ ‘There is an aberration of intellect, and a want of self-possession, here, that alarms me. I say, alarms me ; for American as I am by birth, and republican as I am from the force of circumstances, I cannot but regard England with great interest, and with great affection. What a beautiful country ! What a noble constitution ! What a high-minded, intelligent, and generous people ! When the Whigs came into office, the Tories were not a party, they were the people of England. Where and what are they now ? Will they ever have a lucid interval, or again recognize the sound of their name ? And yet, Sam, doubtful as the prospect of their recovery is, and fearful as the consequences of a continuance of their malady appear to be, one thing is most certain, *a Tory government is the proper government for a monarchy, a suitable one for any country, but it is the only one for England.* I do not mean an ultra one, for I am a moderate man, and all extremes are equally to be avoided ; I mean a temperate, but firm one ; steady to its friends, just to its enemies, and inflexible to all. When compelled to yield, it should be by the force of reason, and never by the power of agitation. Its measures should be actuated by a sense of what is right, and not what is expedient ; for to concede is to recede, — to recede is to evince weakness, — and to betray weakness is to invite attack.’ ” — p. 75.

We have a word to say upon one more topic connected with this book, and then we shall have done. The reader will remember, that, in a previous work, this writer attempted to ridicule Mr. Everett, who was then Governor of Massachusetts, by describing an imaginary interview with him, and his conversation at some small inn. Like many things in the present work, the description was so overdone, the sentiments and language attributed to Mr. Everett were so unlike reality, that the sketch had not even the poor merit of being amusing. We were struck with surprise, at the time, that a person, whose education and position seemed to give the world assurance of a gentleman, could have descended to this paltry kind of malice ; but it passed away with the thousand fooleries of the press, and was speedily forgotten. We should never have recalled that unworthy attempt to lower the character of one whose genius, learning, eloquence, and virtue are the pride of a great country, but that, in the present work, the attempt is more elaborately

repeated, and in a tone more offensive and ungentlemanly than before. The allusions to the theological profession, which Mr. Everett belonged to and adorned in his youth, and the ridiculous nickname, "Abednego Layman," referring to his change of profession, with various other coarse and malicious hints and innuendoes, make it impossible to doubt, that the intended satire is aimed at the American minister to England ; though the grossness of the attack is thinly disguised by setting up a man of straw in the shape of a pretended special minister, and, in another place, by speaking of Mr. Everett by name, in connexion with the imaginary ambassador. We had intended to place this passage before our readers, in order to show them the manner in which this provincial judge deems it decent to write about the United States, and their able minister at the court of St. James ; but on a second perusal, we found the satire too contemptible and pointless to deserve quotation.

Passing over the fact, that must stare every reader in the face, that the vulgar buffoonery of the dialogue is unredeemed by a particle of humor or wit, we ask, What sense of justice can exist in the writer, who attempts to bring discredit on any American gentleman, because, in the mutations of life which naturally grow out of the peculiarities of American society, he has seen fit to change his occupation ; to leave the clerical profession, and enter upon the more extended theatre of political affairs ? In England such a change we suppose is impossible. There, once a clergyman, always a clergyman. But here, where no established church exists, where perfect freedom in matters of religion, as in other matters, is the birthright of every citizen, where the connexion between the clergyman and his society is wholly voluntary, both as to its original formation and its continuance, where men are often driven by necessity to desert the career for which they were educated, and where all careers are open to all, with as few restraints as are compatible with order and the public interests, how unfair to judge of a man's course in this respect by analogies drawn from the artificial and unnatural state of England ! The English system must alone have right and reason on its side, or these attempted sneers at the American minister are pointless ; and that the English system does enjoy this great preëminence, we suspect it would require even a blinder devotion to prescription and usage, than this writer's, to affirm.

What shall we say, too, of the honesty of a writer, who does not scruple to speak of American "bad faith in the business of the Boundary question," when he must have known, from documents published to the world when that sentence was penned, from the declarations of the British Ministry to both Houses of Parliament, and from the well-drawn conclusions of the intelligent men of all parties, that the course of the American negotiator was guided by the strictest integrity, as well as by the most enlightened desire to avert the horrors of war between two great kindred nations? An allusion in this spirit to that illustrious man, to whom the world is mainly indebted for the inestimable blessings of the Treaty of Washington, is much worse than unbecoming. Its true nature we shall not attempt to characterize; but the only effect it can have will be to stamp the author as an unjust, prejudiced, and narrow-minded man.

We have taken the trouble to point out some of the defects of this author's works, not because they deserve, for any intrinsic merit, a moment's attention, but because they are pretty widely read in both countries, and are used for the ungenerous purpose of exciting ill-will between them. The other book, whose title is placed at the head of the present article, stands nearly on the same low level as to truth and honesty of purpose. On its very title-page, the author, in effect, abandons all claim to the character of a truth-telling witness. The express object of the work is to retort on England the treatment which America is imagined to have received from Mr. Dickens. Of course, a purpose so one-sided and polemical, and so openly declared, is a warning to the reader not to take the statements of the book in absolute faith. So far, there is a sort of honesty in the proceeding, which is commendable, because the reader, thus forewarned, is not easily deceived. But what sense of literary duty could the writer have had, in adopting a plan which would make partial statements, discolored and perverted facts, rash generalizations of individual instances, hasty conclusions drawn from narrow or ill-understood premises, quite necessary ingredients in the work? It purports to consist of familiar letters, written by an American lady, who had occasion to reside some time in England. Whether this be fact or fiction, we are unable to say. We have heard it asserted, that this American Lady is wholly an imaginary personage;

and it were better if she were. These letters are not destitute of sprightliness and point ; but they are written, for the most part, in an incorrect, careless, slipshod style, which throws much doubt upon the author's pretensions to the character of a lady. They are loose, rambling, and incoherent ; full of gossiping episodes and trivial remarks. Common things, the little incidents of daily life, careless expressions in conversation, the forms and modes of applying charities to the relief of the poor, are studiously made to take an unfavorable construction, on which monstrous generalizations are built, which the author would have us accept as traits of character in the British nation. We reject it all, as in bad taste, bad temper, bad reasoning, and bad writing. The American name needs no such defences or defenders. It is no help to our character, to prove our neighbour worse than ourselves ; it is an injury to our character to attempt to disparage our neighbour, and fail in the attempt ; for that is calumny.

The wonderful reasoning powers of this author are fairly represented in the following paragraph.

“ We saw Prince Albert set forth on horseback. I consider him eminently handsome, and every one speaks of his amiability. A gentleman near us pronounced him the most fortunate youth in existence. ‘ Yes,’ added a minor-theatre-looking personage, ‘ and he is now, thanks to us, richer than all his tribe.’ In England, the first of virtues is wealth. The Americans may struggle as much or more to attain it, but its mere possession is less worshipped with us than in Great Britain.” — p. 10.

That is to say, because a “ minor-theatre-looking personage ” was overheard to remark, that Prince Albert “ is now, thanks to us, richer than all his tribe,” *therefore*, “ in England, the first of virtues is wealth,” and “ the Americans may struggle as much or more to attain it, but its mere possession is less worshipped with us than in Great Britain.” How imperfectly must this letter-writer have remembered the tone of conversation, not among the “ minor-theatre ” people, but in the most luxurious and refined circles of the commercial cities in the United States, to venture upon a remark like this, — to draw a sweeping conclusion as to national character from the casual exclamation of a fellow in the street ! We wish to treat this book with fairness, and

having stated our objections to it, we commend portions of it to our readers, as evincing a talent for lively and humorous description, and a command of an idiomatic and pleasing epistolary style.

ART. VIII. — *A Catalogue of the Library of Brown University, in Providence, Rhode Island. With an Index of Subjects.* Providence. 1843. 8vo. pp. 560.

WE welcome the indications, which are now crowding upon us from every quarter, that the people of this country are beginning to feel the importance of taking active measures for the establishment and increase of great public libraries. Large collections of books, open for common use, are at once the storehouses and the manufactories of learning and science ; they bring together the accumulated fruits of the experience, the research, and the genius of other ages and distant nations, as well as of our own time and land ; and they create the taste and furnish the indispensable aids for the prosecution of literary and scientific effort in every department. In great cities, they qualify the exclusive spirit of commercial and professional avocations, and encourage men to steal an hour from the pursuit of gain and devote it to the attempt to satisfy a rational curiosity and to cultivate an elegant taste. Connected with literary and academical institutions, they supply the means and multiply the objects of study, and keep alive that enthusiasm in the cause of letters, without which nothing great or permanent can ever be accomplished. They are necessarily of slow growth, but every year adds to their value and efficiency, and diffuses more widely a sense of the benefits to be derived from them, and a knowledge of the mode of using them to the best advantage.

The cost of books has been much diminished of late years, and the facilities for making large collections of them much increased. The recent improvements in the arts of printing and paper-making, and the great increase in the number of readers and purchasers, enabling the trade to count upon extensive sales, cause new works to be offered